

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE
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TAGS: CSCE, SP, NATO

SUBJECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPANISH INTEREST IN HOSTING
NEXT CSCE CONFERENCE AND ENTERING NATO

REFS: A. BELGRADE 5250; B. MADRID 5889

1. REFTELS REPORTED EMERGING SPANISH INTEREST, CENTERING
IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND THE DELEGATION TO THE BELGRADE

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PREPARATORY CONFERENCE, THAT SPAIN HOST THE NEXT CSCE
CONFERENCE, LIKELY TO BE HELD IN 1980. REF A NOTED THAT
MANY DELEGATIONS AT THE BELGRADE PREPARATORY CONFERENCE
ALREADY WERE INCLINING TOWARD MADRID IN PREFERENCE TO
ALTERNATIVES SUCH AS WARSAW AND VALETTA, AND THAT THE
SPANISH AMBASSADOR TO THE BELGRADE PREPARATORY CONFERENCE
WAS TRYING TO GARNER SUPPORT. AT THE SAME TIME, REF B

REPORTED THAT A KEY SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL WAS AWARE OF POSSIBLE CONFLICT BETWEEN THIS INITIATIVE AND SPANISH MOVEMENT TOWARD ENTRY INTO NATO. THIS OFFICIAL ASSERTED THAT SPAIN WOULD RESOLVE ANY SUCH CONFLICT IN FAVOR OF NATO ENTRY. HE ALSO DISCOUNTED THE NOTION THAT SPAIN'S HOSTING CSCE CONFERENCE MIGHT CAUSE SPANISH FOREIGN POLICY TO VEER TOWARD NEUTRALITY.

2. WE AGREE WITH TENTATIVE ASSESSMENT IN REFTELS THAT POTENTIAL CONFLICT BETWEEN THESE TWO SPANISH FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES CREATES THE DANGER THAT THE SOVIETS AND EAST EUROPEANS MIGHT TRY TO SPIKE SPANISH MOVEMENT TOWARD NATO. DOMESTIC SPANISH OPPONENTS OF NATO MEMBERSHIP ALSO PRESUMABLY WOULD FIND AN OPENING HERE. THE SOVIETS AND EAST EUROPEANS PRESUMABLY WOULD SUPPORT A BELGRADE CONFERENCE CHOICE OF MADRID AND COULD LATER PRESSURE SPAIN TO REMAIN ALOOF FROM NATO AS THE PRICE FOR THEIR CONTINUED ARGUMENT TO MADRID AS THE SITE FOR THE NEXT CSCE CONCLAVE.

3. AS EMBASSY MADRID INDICATES IN REF B, THIS SITUATION PRESENTS US WITH A TACTICAL DILEMMA FOR US POLICY: IF THE US GIVES "SILENT CONSENT" TO SPAIN AS HOST FOR THE NEXT CSCE CONFERENCE AND MADRID IS CHOSEN, ACTIVE SPANISH CONSIDERATION OF ENTRY INTO NATO MIGHT BE SHELVED UNTIL AFTER 1980; IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, WE
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DO PRESS SPAIN ON THIS ISSUE, WE COULD EASILY PLAY INTO

HANDS OF THOSE SPANIARDS WHO OPPOSE NATO MEMBERSHIP ON GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD HAMSTRING SPANISH FOREIGN POLICY. KEEPING THIS DILEMMA IN MIND, WE BELIEVE IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO PUT REVERSE SPIN ON BALL THROUGH CAREFUL PRESENTATION TO HIGH SPANISH OFFICIALS OF POTENTIAL DANGERS AND ALSO SUGGESTED STRATEGY FOR HANDLING EVENTUAL SOVIET PRESSURES. THEREFORE, UNLESS YOU PERCEIVE OBJECTIONS, WE SUGGEST THAT YOU RAISE MATTER WITH APPROPRIATE SENIOR OFFICIALS IN LOW-KEY AND OBJECTIVE FASHION TO INSURE THAT THEY APPRECIATE POTENTIAL CONFLICT SITUATION WHICH COULD FACE SPAIN AS CSCE HOST FOR THE NEXT CONFERENCE. YOU MIGHT ALSO SUGGEST THAT SPANISH MAKE CLEAR, PERHAPS AS PUBLIC MATTER, THAT A DECISION ON HOSTING CONFERENCE NEITHER IMPLIES NOR REQUIRES ANY RESTRICTION ON SPAIN'S BASIC FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION OR CONDUCT OF ITS FOREIGN RELATIONS. IF THIS CONDITION IS MADE CLEAR AT THE OUTSFT THE GOS WILL BE BETTER POSITIONED TO DEAL WITH LATPR SOVIET PRESSURES. INDEED, SUCH PRESSURES COULD BACKFIRE, EXPOSING THE SOVIETS AS THOSE SEEKING TO RESTRICT SPAIN'S FREEDOM OF ACTION.

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4. IN ANY EVENT, SUGGESTED APPROACH WOULD HELP REDUCE
RISK OF UNPLEASANT REACTION TO US EFFORT TO DISCOURAGE
SPAIN FROM HOSTING CONFERENCE. SPAIN MAY ALSO COME OUT OF
THIS EXPERIENCE WITH CLEARER RECOGNITION THAT NON-ALIGN-
MENT OFFERS NO IMMUNITY FROM CONSTRAINTS IN FOREIGN
POLICY. VANCE

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